

# NATIVE BUFFER

## Q&A

The following are questions that arose during recent training sessions that are intended to provide further guidance on the direction of the Native Buffer Cost-Share Program.

**1. What record keeping is required for this program?**

Just like your base State Cost Share program, keep a complete set of program records for this grant.

**2. What seed and plant standards apply to this program?**

Starting with FY 2010 funding new BWSR “Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines” apply to the Native Buffer program ([www.bwsr.state.mn.us/practices/index.html](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/practices/index.html)). These guidelines cover the topics of diversity levels, seed and plant source, native variety use, seed mixes, yellow-tag seed, seed labeling and protecting existing native prairies.

**3. How much earthwork is allowed under Lakescaping to deal with shoreline erosion?**

State Cost Share has a separate practice called D.9 Streambank, Shoreland and Roadside Protection that is designed for erosion control. Native Buffer cost share is limited to very minimal grading as part of the site preparation process and the vegetative component of shoreline work. The two practices may compliment one another.

**4. What NRCS practices standards should be used for this program?**

The NRCS practice standards that apply to this program include:

NRCS Standard 643 - “Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitats”

NRCS Standard 657 – “Wetland Restoration” for areas with moist/wet soils

NRCS Standard 580 - “Streambank and Shoreline Protection”

Standards in the BWSR “Vegetation Establishment and Enhancement Guidelines” will take precedent over seed/plant use information in individual practice standards.

**5. How does State Seed Law apply to this program?**

All containers of seed for this program must be labeled in compliance with the Minnesota State Seed Law Chapter 21. In addition, the Pure Live Seed (PLS) percentage for each component must be included. The origin should be identified as narrowly as possible according to ecotype region, county or township. MDA staff may test samples of seed for this program to verify labeling of seed.

**6. When is it appropriate to use the three year rent provision of this program?**

You may use the rent payment option at the discretion of the SWCD board when there are acres being converted from ag use and no other program payments are involved. This provision is designed to jump start seed production or biomass production where it will take three years to get established before the site is able to return a revenue source.

**7. Are existing RIM easements eligible for this program?**

Increasing diversity within existing RIM easements is an appropriate use of this funding.

**8. What is expected for program reporting?**

Starting with FY2010/2011 funding and prior to receiving funds, a work plan must be entered into eLINK. The work plan will include information from the application plus additional information on projected outcomes or environmental benefits. A mid-term report is required by February 1 each year and will be submitted in eLINK as updates to this work plan.

Final eLINK reporting is required at the end of the grant program. This report will include information about efforts that worked related to establishing and maintaining native buffers.

Guidance for entering work plans and reporting in eLINK is available on the BWSR website:

[www.bwsr.state.mn.us/eLINK/reporting/index.html](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/eLINK/reporting/index.html).